

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 24 are currently pending in the present application. With this Response, Applicant cancels claims 9 and 22 without prejudice or disclaimer, amends claims 10 – 12 and 16 to include the limitations of former claim 9, and amends claim 15 to depend from amended claim 10. No new matter is introduced.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 1 – 8, 17 – 21, 23 and 24 are currently allowable.

OBJECTED CLAIMS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 10 – 14 and 16 are objected to, but that each would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of base claim 9 and any intervening claims. Applicant amends each of claims 10 – 12 and 16 to include the limitations of former claim 9, and respectfully submits that claims 10 – 12 and 16 are therefore allowable. As claims 13 and 14 each depend from allowable claim 11, Applicant submits that claims 13 and 14 are allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this objection be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 9 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,069,890 to White et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,304,565 to Ramamurthy. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over White in view of Ramamurthy and U.S. Patent No. 6,452,922 to Ho.

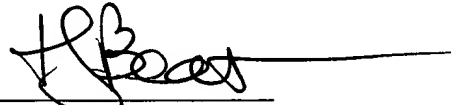
Applicant cancels claims 9 and 22 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant amends claim 15 to depend from allowable claim 10, and respectfully submits that claim 15 is allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 8, 10 – 21, 23 and 24, consisting of independent claims 1, 10 – 12, 16, 17, 23 and 24, and the claims dependent therefrom, is in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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